

TWO  
SERMONS  
Preached at  
THURLOW  
IN  
SUFFOLK.

On those words, *Rom. 6. 13.*

---Yield your selves to God---

By *J. H.* Minister of the Gospel.

L O N D O N,

Printed for *Tho. Parkhurst* at the *Bible*  
and *Three Crowns* at the lower end  
of *Cheapside.* 1688.

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To the much honoured  
Bartholomew Soame of  
Thurlow Esq; and Susan-  
na his pious Consort.

*My Worthy Friends ;*

**I** Have at length yielded to your  
Importunity; and do here offer  
these Sermons to publick view,  
and your own; which were, one day the  
last Summer, preached under your  
roof; attributing more to your pious  
design herein, than to my own rea-  
sons against it. I no farther insist  
upon the incongruity, having divers  
years ago published a small Treatise  
of Self-dedication, now again to

## The Epistle

send abroad another on the same Subject. For the way of Tractation is here very different; this may fall into the hands of divers, who have never seen the other; and however, they who have read the other, have it in their choice whether they will trouble themselves with this or no. And tho' your purpose which you urged me with, of lodging one of these little Books in each family of the hearers, might have been answered by so disposing of many a better Book already extant; yet you having told me how greatly you observed them to be moved by these plain Discourses, considering the peculiar advantage of reading what had been, with some acceptance and relish heard before (through that greater vigour that accompanies the Ordinance of  
Preaching



## Dedicatory.

*Preaching to an Assembly, than doth usually the solitary first reading of the same thing) I was not willing to run the hazard of incurring a guilt, by refusing a thing so much desired, and which, through God's blessing, might contribute something, tho' in never so low a degree, to the saving of mens Souls. I could not indeed, as I told you, undertake to recollect every thing that was spoken, according to that latitude, and freedom of expression, wherewith it was fit to inculcate momentous things, to a plain Countrey-Auditory. But I have omitted nothing I could call to mind. Being little concern'd that the more curious may take notice, with dislike, how much, in a work of this kind, I prefer plainness (tho' they may call it rude-*

## The Epistle

*ness) of speech, before that which goes for wisdom of words, or the most laboured Periods.*

*May you find an abundant blessing on your Household, for the sake of the Ark, which you have so piously, and kindly received: And whereas, by your means, the parts about you, have an help for the spreading the Knowledge of God among them, added to what they otherwise more statedly enjoy; may the blessing of Heaven succeed all sincere endeavours of both sorts; to the more general introducing of the new man which is renew'd in knowledge---where there is neither Jew nor Greek, Circumcision, nor Uncircumcision, but Christ is all, and in all: To whose Grace, you are, with sincere affection*

# Dedicatory.

tion, and great sense of your kindness, earnestly recommended, by

Your much oblig'd, faithful  
Servant in Christ,

*John Howe.*

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These Books Written by the same  
Author, are sold by *Thomas Park-*  
*hurst* at the *Bible and Three Crowns*  
in *Cheapside*.

1. **T**HE Blessedness of the Righteous: The  
Vanity of this Mortal Life. On *Psalms*  
17. ver. 15. and *Psalms* 89. 47.

2. Of Thoughtfulness for the Morrow, with  
an Appendix concerning the Immoderate Desire  
of Fore-knowing things to come.

3. The Redeemer's Tears wept over lost Souls,  
in a Treatise on *Luke* 19. 41, 42. With an Ap-  
pendix wherein somewhat is occasionally dis-  
coursed concerning the Sin against the Holy Ghost,  
and how God is said to Will the Salvation of them  
that perish.

4. Of Charity in Reference to other Mens  
Sins.

5. A Sermon directing what we are to do after  
a strict inquiry whether or no we truly love God.

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A Discourse of the Saving Grace of God; by  
*David Clarkson* Minister of the Gospel.

The Conversion of the Soul, to which is add-  
ed, A Warning to Sinners to prepare for Judg-  
ment, by *Nath. Vincent* Minister of the Gospel.

A Discourse of Old Age, tending to the In-  
struction, Caution and Comfort of Aged Persons.

Baptismal Bonds Renewed, being Meditations  
upon *Psalms* 50. ver. 5. By *O. Heywood* Mini-  
ster of the Gospel.

Rom. 6 part of the 13<sup>th</sup> verse.

—Yield your selves to God.—

**T**Hese are but a few words, but I can speak to you of no greater or more important thing than I am to press upon you from them this day. We are above taught how absurd it is to continue in sin, whereto we are avowedly dead, v. 1, 2. as is signified by our Baptism; together with our entrance into a new state of life, and that in both we are to be conformed unto the Death and Resurrection of Christ, v. 3, 4, 5. so that sin ought now no more to have a new dominion over us, than Death can again have over him, v. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. We are therefore exhorted so to account of our selves, and of our present state, *That we are dead to sin, but alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord*; and thereupon never more to let sin govern us, or reign over us, or

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yield

## *Yield your selves to God.*

yield to it, *verse 11, 12, 13. former part.*

But what then? How are we otherwise to dispose of our selves? If we may not yield our selves to the service of sin, what are we then to do with our selves? The Text tells us, and the very reason of the thing shews it; *But yield your selves to God, &c.*

The Subject to be discours'd of is an *express Precept*, charging it upon us all as our unquestionable duty, to *yield our selves to God*; which therefore it can only be our business in speaking to this Text, to *explain and apply.*

1. We are to explain it. Whosoever shall charge upon others such a duty, not obvious, perhaps, at the first view, in the full extent of it, to every ones understanding, may well expect to be askt; But what do you mean by this Precept? or what doth this *yielding our selves to God* signifie?

And here are two things to be opened to you.

1. How, or under what notions, we are to consider God and our selves in this matter.

2. What our *yielding our selves to him*, so consider'd, must include.

1. How

1. How we are to consider or look upon *God* in this affair? You are to consider him, both as *he is in himself*, and according to the relations he bears to you; whether before your yielding your selves to him, or in, and upon your so doing.

1. *As he is in himself*: You that have heard, or now read what I have said, and do write, here make a stand, and bethink your selves a while!

What! Are you about yielding your selves to God? Sure you ought to be thinking of it as soon as you hear his claim laid to you.

But do you now know with whom you have to do? Too many have the Name of God, that great and awful Name! in their mouth or ear, and have no correspondent thought in their mind; it passes with them as a transient sound, as soon over as another, common, word, of no greater length; and leaves no impression. Perhaps there is less in their minds to answer it, than most other words which men use in common discourse. For they have usually distinct thoughts of the things they speak of; otherwise they should neither understand one another

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nor themselves, but might speak of an Horse, and mean a Sheep: Or be thought to mean so. And it would no more move a man, or impress his mind, to hear or mention a Jest, than a matter of life and death. But the *holy and reverend Name of God* is often so slightly mentioned, as in common Oaths, or in idle talk is so meerly taken in vain, that if they were on the sudden stopt, and askt what they thought on, or had in their mind, when they mentioned that word, and were to make a true answer, they cannot say they thought of any thing: As if the Name of God, the *All!* were the name of *No-thing!* Otherwise had they thought what that great Name signifies, either they had not mentioned it, or the mention of it had struck their hearts! and even overwhelm'd their very souls! I could tell you what awe and observance hath been wont to be exprest in reference to that sacred Name, among a people that were called by it; and surely the very sound of that Name ought ever to shake all the powers of our souls, and presently form them to reverence and adoration. Shall we think it fit to play or trifle with



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with it, as is the common wont? My Friends, shall we *now* do so, when we are call'd upon to *yield our selves to God*? Labour to hear and think, and act intelligently, and as those that have the understandings of men. And now especially in this solemn transaction, endeavour to render God great to your selves: Enlarge your minds, that as far as is *possible* and *needful*, they may take in the *entire notion* of him. As to *what he is in himself*, you must conceive of him as a *Spirit*, as his own Word, which can best tell us what he is, instructs us; and so as a Being of far higher excellency than any thing you can see with your eyes, or touch with your hands, or than can come under the notice of any of your senses. You may easily apprehend *Spiritual Being* to be the source and spring of life, and self-moving power. This World were all a dead un-moving lump, if there were no such thing as Spirit; as your bodies when the soul is fled. You must conceive him to be an *Eternal, Self-subsisting Spirit*, not sprung up into Being from another, as our souls are: But who from the excellency of his own Being, was necessarily

Joh. 4.24.

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*of*, and *from* himself; comprehending originally and eternally in himself the fulness of all Life and Being. I would fain lead you here, as by the hand, a few plain and easie steps. You are sure that somewhat now is, of this you can be in no doubt; and next you may be as sure that somewhat hath, *of it self*, ever been: For if nothing at all now were, you can easily apprehend it impossible that any thing should ever be, or of it self now begin to be, and spring up out of nothing. Do but make this supposition in your own minds, and the matter will be as plain to you as any thing can be, that if nothing at all were now in being, nothing could ever come into being; wherefore you may be sure, that because there is somewhat now in being, there must have been somewhat or other always in being, that was eternally of it self. And then to go a little farther, since you know there are many things in being that were not of themselves, you may be sure that what was always of it self, had in it a sufficiency of active power to produce other things, otherwise nothing that is not of it self could  
ever

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ever be. As you know that we were not of our selves ; and the case is the same as to whatsoever else our eyes behold.

You must conceive of God therefore as comprehending originally in his own Being, which is most peculiar to himself, a power to produce all whatsoever Being, Excellency and Perfection is to be found in all the whole Creation. For there can be nothing which either is not, or arises not from, what was of it self. And therefore that he is an absolutely, universally, and infinitely perfect Being, and therefore that *Life, Knowledge, Wisdom, Power, Goodness, Holiness, Justice, Truth*, and whatsoever other *conceivable Excellencies*, do all in highest perfection, belong, as necessary Attributes, unchangeably and without possibility of diminution unto him. And all which his own Word (agreeably to the plain reason of things) doth in multitudes of places ascribe to him ; as you that are acquainted with the Bible cannot but know. You must therefore conceive of him, as *the All in All*. So great, so excellent, so glorious a One he is, to whom you are to surrender and yield your selves.

B 4

You

## *Yield your selves to God.*

You are to conceive of him as *most essentially One*, for there can be but one *All*. And so his Word teaches you to conceive. *Hear, O Israel ! the Lord our God is one Lord*, Deut. 6. 4. *We know there is no other God but one*, &c. 1 Cor. 8. 4, 5, 6. Your thoughts therefore need not be divided within you, nor your minds hang in doubt, to whom you are to betake and yield your selves: there is no place or pretence for halting between two Opinions. He most righteously lays the sole claim to you, *a just God and a Saviour, and there is none besides him*, Isa. 45. 21. (And so we are told often in that and the foregoing Chapters. He whose far-discerning eye projects its beams every way, and ranges thorough all infinity, says, *he knows not any*, ch. 44. 8.)

Yet again you are to conceive of him as *Three in One*; and *that* in your yielding your selves to him; as the prescrib'd form, when this surrender is to be made in Baptism, directs; which runs thus, *In the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, Matth. 28. 19. You are not to be curious in your enquiries beyond what is written in this matter, how far the

Subsistents

Subsistents in the Godhead *are* three, an in what sense one; they cannot be both in the same sense. But there is latitude enough to conceive how they *may be* distinct from each other, and yet agree in *one Nature*; which in none of them depending upon *will and pleasure*, sets each of them infinitely above all *created Being*; which for the Divine *pleasure only was and is created*, Rev. 4. 11. And that we so far conceive of them *as three*, as to apprehend, some things spoken of one, that are not to be affirm'd of another of them, is so plain, of so great consequence, and the whole frame of *practical Religion* so much depends thereon; and even this transaction of yielding up our selves (which must be introductive, and fundamental to all the rest) that it is by no means to be neglected in our daily course, and least of all in this solemn business, as will more appear anon. In the mean time, set this ever blessed, glorious God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost before your eyes, as to whom (thus in himself consider'd) you are now to yield your selves.

2. You must conceive of him according

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ing to the relations which he bears towards you, partly before your yielding your selves to him, and partly in and upon your doing it. That is,

1. Before you do any such thing, you must conceive of him, as

Rom. 11. 36. 1. *Your Creator, the Author of your Beings, of whom, and through whom, and to whom all things are.* He that made you, demands you for himself. You are required to yield your selves to him that gave you breath.

2. As the continual Sustainer of your Being; and who renews your life unto  
Act. 17. 28. you every moment; *in whom you live, and move, and have your Being continually;* so that if he should withdraw his supports, you immediately drop into nothing.

But these are things common to you with all other creatures; and signifie therefore his antecedent right in you, before you have yielded your selves, *upon which* you ought to do it, and cannot without great injustice to him decline doing it. There are other considerations also you ought to entertain concerning him in this your yielding your selves to him, *viz.* of some things which are partly  
and

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and in some sence before it, and which it supposes, but which partly also, and in a more especial sence would follow and be inferr'd by it. Principally, this fourfold consideration you should have of him in your yielding your selves to him, *viz.* as your *Owner*, your *Teacher*, your *Ruler*, and your *Benefactor*, and all these with the addition of *Supream*, it being impossible he should have a *Superior*; or that there should be any one above him in any of these. And he is in some sence all these to you before you can have yielded your selves (as may in great part be collected from what hath been already said;) But when you yield your selves to him, he will be all these to you in a far higher, nobler, and more excellent sence; and you are to yield your selves to him *as such*, or that *in your so doing*, he may actually become *such* to you.

I. As your *Owner*: The God *whose you are* (as the Apostle speaks, *Act. 27. 23. and whom*, as it there follows, and is naturally consequent, *you are to serve.*) You were *his* by a *former right*, as all things, being made by him, are. But you are to yield your selves to him, that you may  
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be more peculiarly his, in a sense more excellent in it self, and more comfortable to you ; as *Exod. 19. 5.* *If you will obey— you shall be to me a peculiar treasure above all people, for all the Earth is mine.* Of such as fear him, the great God says, *They shall be mine in the day when I make up my Jewels, Mal. 3. 17.* Your yielding your selves adds nothing to his right in you ; you therein only recognize, and acknowledge the right he had in you before, but it adds to you a capacity and qualification, both by the tenour of his Gospel-Covenant, and in the nature of the thing, for such nobler uses as otherwise you cannot serve for. As the more contemptible lumber about a man's house may be as truly his, as the most precious things ; but neither doth he intend, nor can such meaner things admit to be the ornaments, either of his Person, or his House. The great God intends his devoted peculiar People to be to him *a Crown and royal Diadem, (Isa. 62. 3.)* when he puts away the wicked of the Earth like dross, *Psal. 119. v. 119.* *In a great house there are not only Vessels of Silver and Gold, but also of Wood, and of Earth, 2 Tim. 2. 20.* But 'tis only the  
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purged and sanctified soul (which is also a self-devoted one) that shall be the Vessel unto honour, being made meet for the Master's use, and prepared to every good work, *v. 21.* Persons and things acquire a sacredness by being devoted to God. Persons especially, that can and do devote themselves, are highly ennobled by it; he hereupon (besides their relative holiness) really more and more sanctifies and frames them for his own more immediate service and communion. Of such a People he tells us, that he hath formed them for himself, and they shall praise him; and to them he saith (intending it manifestly in the more eminent sense) *Thou art mine, Isa. 43. 1, 7, 21.* Such may with a modest and humble, but with a just confidence freely say, *I am thine, save me--Psal. 119. 94.* In yielding your selves consider therefore first, that he *is your Owner* by an unquestionable former right, and let that effectually move you to do it with all your hearts. For will you not give him his own? When you account duty to your Prince obliges you to *give to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's*, will you not *give God the things that are God's?*  
And

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And will you not know him for your Owner? *The Oxe knows his Owner, Isa. 1. 3.* Or will it satisfie you to be in no other kind *his*, than brutes and Devils are, that either through an incapacity of Nature cannot acknowledge him, or through a malignity of Nature will not? O yield your selves, with humble desire and expectation that he will vouchsafe *otherwise to own you!*

2. *As your Teacher*; so indeed he also is to *all men*, tho' they never yield themselves to him. He that *teaches man knowledge*, shall not he know? *Psal. 94. 10.* There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty gives him understanding. Yea and inferiour creatures, as they all owe their Natures, and peculiar Instincts to him, may be said to have him for their Teacher too. But will it content you to be so only taught by him? There is another sort of Teaching, which, if you yield your selves to him *as your great Instructor*, he will vouchsafe unto you. The things you *know not*, and which it is necessary you should know, *he will teach you, i. e.* such things as are of real necessity to your true and final welfare,

fare, not which only serve to please your fancy, or gratifie your curiosity. For his Teaching respects an appointed, certain end, suitable to his Wisdom and Mercy, and to the calamity and danger of your state. The Teaching requisite for *perishing sinners*, was, *what they might do to be saved*. And when we have cast about in our own thoughts never so much, we have no way to take but to *yield our selves to God*, who will then be our most undeceiving Guide. To whom it belongs to save us at last, to him only it can belong to lead us in the way to that blessed end.

Many anxious Enquiries, and fervent Disputes there have been, how one may be infallibly assur'd of the way to be sav'd. They are to be excus'd who think it not fit, but upon very plain grounds, to venture so great a concernment, or to run so great a hazard in a meer Complement to any man, or party of men. Confident expressions, as, *My soul for yours*, and such like, signifie nothing with a cautious considering man, except that such as them care as little for his Soul as their own. The *Papal Infallibility* some would have us trust to at a venture, & would make us think it rudeness

\* The  
Gallican  
Church,  
&c.  
† Du Pin,  
&c.

ness to doubt it; when no body stands upon good manners *in endeavouring to escape a ruine*; when a great part of their own Communion trust not to it\*. And some of them have written strongly against it †. The accurate stating and discussing of the Controversie, how far, or in what sense any such thing as *Infallible Light* may belong to the Christian Church, are not fit for this place, nor for a Discourse of this nature. 'Tis enough now to say that this claim hereof to the Pope or Bishop of *Rome*, as such,

1. Cannot be prov'd.
2. May be plainly disprov'd.

1. It cannot be prov'd. For since no Principles of common Reason are pretended sufficient to prove it of any man, or of him more than another, it must be prov'd by supernatural Revelation, if at all. But in the written Word of God there is no such thing. Pretences from thence are too vain to be refuted or mention'd. And if any other Revelation should be pretended, 'twill be a new, and as impossible a task to prove the Divinity of that Revelation, so as to infer upon the World an obligation to believe it.

Nor

Nor is it necessary to insist upon this ; because,

2. It may be plainly disprov'd ; for the same thing cannot be both true and false. And it sufficiently disproves *such a man's* Infallibility, or the impossibility of his erring, that it can be evidently prov'd he hath err'd.

As when he hath determined against the express Word of Christ, forbidding them (to take one or two Instances among many) to drink of the Eucharistical Cup, whom he hath commanded to drink of it. Or (to mention a more important one) when *Believers in Christ*, or *Lovers of him*, are pronounced damned, who he hath said shall not perish, but have everlasting life, and the Crown of Righteousness. Or when on the other hand pardon of sin and eternal life are pretended to be given to such, whom the Evangelical Law condemns to death.

When one to whom this privilege hath been asserted to belong, hath determined against another, to whom upon the same grounds it must equally belong. As 'tis well known in the Christian Church, that Pope might be alledged  
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against

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against Pope, and one Papal Constitution against another. Not to insist on what might be shewn out of their own History, that the same Pope hath, being so, chang'd his judgment in a point of Doctrine, and left us to divine when he was the fallible, and when the infallible Pope. And again,

When there have been determinations against the common uncorrupted senses of mankind, as that what their sight, and touch, and tast assures them is Bread, is said to be the flesh of an humane body.

For if you cannot be sure of what both your own, and the sound senses of any other man would tell you, you can be sure of nothing at all: You cannot be sure you see one another, or hear me speaking to you; nor be sure when you heard the transforming words, *This is my Body*; or much less that they were ever spoken, if you heard them not; or that that was Bread and not a Stone, or a piece of Clay that is pretended to be transubstantiated by them. The foundation of all certainty were upon these terms taken away from among men on Earth; and upon the same *common grounds* upon which it is pretended you ought to believe

lieve that which is shewn or offered you to be the flesh of a man, and not bread any longer, you must believe or judge the quite contrary, that it is bread still, and not flesh, and consequently that he is far from being infallible, but doth actually err, upon whose authority you are directed to believe otherwise.

And indeed the claimed Infallibility is by this sufficiently disprov'd, that there is no imaginable way of proving it. For if there were any such thing, it must be *by God's own immediate gift, and vouchsafement*; How otherwise should *a man* be made infallible? And if so, it must be for an end worthy of a wise and a merciful God; whereupon for the same reason, for which he should have made such a man infallible, he should have made it infallibly certain to other men, that he hath made him so. Whereas there is no *one point* wherein his infallible determination can be pretended to be necessary, *against* which there is more to be said than against the pretence it self of his Infallibility; Nor *for which*, less is to be said than can, with any colour, or without highest and most just contempt be

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said for it. The most weighty thing that I have known alledg'd is, the great expediency of an *Infallible Judge*. But if we will think that a good way of arguing, that things are *in fact* so or so, because we can fancy it would be better if they were; we may as well prove that all mankind are sincere Christians, or there is no sin in the World, nor ever was, and a thousand things besides in the natural World, that never were, or will be, because it appears to us 'twould be for the better. So much is the foolishness of man wiser than God.

Besides, that *Sanctity* must be judg'd as necessary to the final salvation and felicity of the souls of men as *Orthodoxy*, or *exemption from doctrinal Error*, by all, with whom either Christian Religion, or common Reason signifies any thing. For the same reason therefore for which it can be thought necessary God should have put it into the power of any man to *make others not err*, he should have put it equally into his power to *make them holy*, to renew and change their hearts and lives. But what man hath this power? And one would reasonably expect,



pect, if *either* were, that *both* powers should be lodg'd in the *same* man; which if they should pretend, who assert the other unto one man, their own Histories might make them blush, unless they can think it more probable that he can and will effectually sanctifie another, and make him holy, who is himself most infamously impure and unholy, than that he can secure another from erring in matters of Doctrine, who cannot secure himself.

But then it may be said, If such sure light and guidance is not to be found or had from one man, it must be from some community or body of men in the Christian Church. For, can it be thought God should have taken care to settle a Religion in the World, on purpose for the saving of mens souls, that yet affords no man any certainty of being saved by it?

I answer, yes, there is a certain, undeceiving Light afforded by it to the whole body of sincere Christians sufficient, and intended, not to gratifie a vain humour, but to save their souls, and which you can only, and may confidently expect by *yielding your selves to God as your Teacher.*

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*Teacher.* As it cannot agree with the absolute perfection of his Nature to be himself deceiv'd in any thing, it can, you may be sure, as little agree with it to deceive you, or let you mistake your way, in the things wherein he hath encourag'd and induc'd you to commit and entrust your selves to his conduct and guidance: Will he let a soul wander and be lost, that hath entirely given up it self to be led and taught by him? His Word hath at once exprest to you his Nature, and his Good-will towards you, in this case. *Good and upright is the Lord, therefore will he teach sinners in the way, Psal. 25. 8.* But what sinners? the next words tell you, *the meek* (self-resigned ones, humble, teachable learners) *he will guide in Judgment*, or with Judgment (as that particle admits to be read) he will guide them judiciously, and surely, so that your hearts need not misgive, or suspect, or doubt to follow; *The meek will he teach his way, v. 9.* Who would not wish and be glad to have such a Teacher? *You shall know* (how exprest is his Word!) *if you follow on to know the Lord*; for, *his going forth is prepared as the morning,*  
*Hof.*

*Hof. 6. 3.* You do not need to devise in the morning how to create your own Light, 'tis prepar'd and ready for you; the Sun was made before you were, and it keeps its course, and so constantly will God's own Light shine to you, without your contrivance or care, for any thing but to seek, receive it, and be guided by it.

Know your advantage in having such a Teacher.

1. He will teach you inwardly; *even your very hearts*, and so as his Instructions shall reach the center, the inmost of your spirits. *God that made light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, &c.*

*2 Cor. 4. 6.* And when that holy good man, had been solacing himself with highest pleasure in considering this, that God was his portion, so contentful and satisfying a one, that he cannot forbear saying, *The lines are fall'n to me in pleasant places, and I have a goodly heritage, Psal. 16. 5, 6.* He presently adds, *I will bless the Lord who hath given me counsel; q. d.* I should never else have thought of such a thing: it had never come into my mind to think of chusing God for my  
C 4                      portion

portion. I should have done like the rest of the vain World, have follow'd shadows all my days. *My reins also instruct me in the night season.* He will so teach you, as to make you teach your selves, put an abiding word into you, that shall talk with you when you sit in your houses, and walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up, and whereby you shall be enabled to commune with your own hearts upon your beds, while others sleep, and revolve, or roll over in your minds, dictates of life. You will not need to say, Who shall ascend into Heaven, to bring down Christ from above? Or, Who shall descend into the deep, to bring Christ again from the dead? For the Word will be nigh thee, not in thy mouth only, but in thine heart, &c. You will have in you an ingrafted Word, and the Law of your God will be in your heart, so as none of your steps shall slide. This is our Lord's own interpretation of divers words of the Prophets, that in the days of the more general diffusion of holy, vital, light, which was to be after his own appearance in the World, *They shall be all taught of God,*

Deut. 30.  
11, 12, &c.

Rom. 10.  
6, 7, 8.

Jam. 1. 21.

Psa. 37. 31.

God, *John 6.45. i. e.* so as to have their hearts inclin'd towards himself, and drawn to him, as the reference of these words to those of the foregoing verse shews. Wherein,

2. Lies your further advantage, *That by him you shall be taught effectually.* Other Teaching, as it doth but reach the ear, or only, at the most, beget some faint notions in the mind, that you are little the better for, *his* shall produce real fruit; *He is the Lord your God who teaches you to profit*; and who by gentle and unforcible, but by most prevailing insinuations, shall slide in upon your spirits, win them by light and love, and allure them to a compliance with what shall be in the end safe and happy for your selves. He will instruct you, tho' not with a violent, yet with a *strong hand*, so as not to lose his kind design. Others teach you, and leave you what they found you; convinc't perhaps, but not chang'd; unable to resist any ill inclination, or your disinclination to that which was good. *Power* will accompany his Teaching; a conquering power that will secretly constrain and captivate your hearts;

1 Sam. 12.  
23.

hearts ; and how pleasant a Victory will that be to your selves ! O the peace and joy you will find springing up within you, when once you feel your selves overcome ! The most that a man can say to you is, what the Prophet *Samuel* once said, (so great, and so good a man) *God forbid I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you ; but I will teach you the good and the right way :* He could only shew that way, and pray that God would do the rest ; which implies God only can so teach it you, as to make you walk in it.

Psal. 68. 18.  
Eph. 4. 11.

I am not persuading you to slight humane Teaching ; you will need it ; and 'tis among the gifts which your glorious Redeemer *being ascended on high* hath given to men, *viz. Pastors and Teachers*. But understand their Teaching to be only subordinate, and Ministerial. *Without, or against* God, you are to call no man Master, or Teacher upon Earth.

And thus far their Teaching is to be regarded, as it agrees,

1. With what God doth inwardly teach you, by that common light which shines in every man's own bosom, that  
with

with a sincere mind, attends to it, and which is too little attended to. There are *Truths* too commonly held in *unrighteousness*, seated generally in the Minds and Consciences of men; by which, tho' they have not another Law, *they are a Law to themselves*; and for the stifling and resisting whereof, *the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against them*. And from such Truths they might infer others, and where God affords external helps, come to discern a sure ground whereupon to understand that what is contained besides in the frame of Christian Doctrine is true; being enabled to judge of the evidences that prove the whole Revelation thereof to be from God; and nothing being in it self more evident than that what he hath revealed is true. And withal God is graciously pleased to shine into Minds that with upright aims set themselves to enquire out and understand his Mind; and so farther light comes to be superadded to that which is common. Now take heed how you neglect what a man teaches you, agreeably to that inward light which is already (one way or other) in your own Minds and Consciences.

Rom. i. 18.

2. 14.

2 Cor. 4.2.

sciences. Hither in some part, and in great part we are to appeal in our Teaching you: So the more early Christian Teachers did; *Not handling* (say they) *the Word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the Truth commending our selves to every man's Conscience in the sight of God.* In the most deeply fundamental things that concern your practice every day, we may appeal to your selves, and your own Consciences. If we say to you, Ought you not to live according to his Will that gave you breath? Should you not above all things fear and love, and trust and obey him that made you and all things? Should you not do as you would be done unto? Should you not take more care for your immortal Souls, than for your mortal flesh? You must every one say, I believe in mine own Conscience this is so. If I appeal to you in the very thing I am speaking of, should you not yield your selves to God whose Creatures you are? I doubt not you will any of you say, I think in my very Conscience I should. We have you witnesses against your selves, if you will not hear us in such things. And again, it being a matter  
very



very capable of plain proof, that those writings which we call the Holy Scriptures, were from God, our Teaching ought so far to be regarded by you as,

2. We can manifest to you that it agrees with the Scriptures. And we are sure he will never teach you inwardly against what he hath there taught. Will the God of Truth say and unsay the same thing? That were to overthrow the design of all his Instructions, and to subvert the Authority which he requires men to reverence. *No man* could expect to be regarded on such terms. And by this Rule freely examine all that we teach you, as our Saviour directed the Jews to do, *John* 5. 39. And for the doing whereof, the Apostle commended the *Berean* Christians, *Acts* 17. 11. And we have here the same advantage at length, tho' not so immediately, upon your Consciences; which cannot but judge that whatsoever is found in that Word which you confess to be Divine, must be most certainly true.

And if within such limits you take the help of men for your Instruction; having yielded your selves to God as your  
supream

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pream and highest Teacher, you are upon safe terms. Only be sincere in listening to his dictates, whether internal or external. Let not a prepossess heart, or vicious inclination be their Interpreter. *If any man will do his will, he shall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God, &c.* John 7. 17.

3. You must consider God, in your yielding your selves, as your *Sovereign Ruler*. For to whom you yield your selves servants to obey, his servants you are to whom you obey; as by v. 16. Tho' Teaching and Ruling may be diversly conceiv'd of, they cannot be separate in this case. The nobler and final part of God's Teaching you, is teaching you *your duty*; what you are to *practise and do*. And so when he teaches you, he commands you too; and leaves it not arbitrary to you whether you will be directed by him or no. What is his by former right, and by after-consent, and self-resignation, shall it not be govern'd by him? if it be a subject capable of Laws and Government, as such consent shews it to be? Your yielding your selves to God is not an homage but a mockery, if you do it not with a resolution to receive

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ceive the Law from his mouth: and that wherein soever he commands, you will to your uttermost obey. But in this, and the other things that follow, my limits constrain me unto more brevity. Only let not this apprehension of God be frightful, yea let it be amiable to you, as in it self it is, and cannot but be to you, if you consider the loveliness of his Government, the kind design of it, and how suitable it is to the kindest design; that it is a Government first and principally over minds, purposely intended to reduce them to an holy and peaceful order, wherein it cannot but continue them, when that *Kingdom* comes to be settled there; which stands in *righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*, and all the Laws whereof are summ'd up in *Love*; being such also as in the keeping whereof there is great reward.

4. You are to consider him, and accordingly to yield your self, as your *greatest Benefactor*, or rather as your *best and supremam good*. Indeed you cannot sever his being your *Ruler* from his being your *Benefactor* (more than his being your *Teacher* from his being your *Ruler*) when the tendency and design of his Government

ment is understood. For it is a very principal part of our felicity to be under his Government, and he doth you the greatest good by ruling you, when otherwise nothing is more evident than that you would run your selves into the greatest of evil, and soon be most miserable creatures. You are now so far happy as you are subject to his Government, and that which it aims at is to make you finally and compleatly happy. For it is the design of his Government, not only to regulate your actions, but your inclinations, and principally towards himself.

Eph. 4. 18. You have been *alienated from the life of God*, were become strangers to him, yea

Col. 1. 21. and *enemies in your very minds*; for the

Rom. 8. 7. *carnal mind is enmity against God*. The very business of his Government is in the first place to alter the temper of your

Rom. 8. 7. *minds*; for *continuing carnal*, they neither  
*latter part.* *are subject to the Law of God, nor can be,*

as the same place tells you. Therefore if his Government take place in you, and you *become subject*, you *become spiritual*, the *Law of the Spirit of Life*, having now the possession and the power of you. Nor was it possible he should ever be an *effectual*

Verse 2.

*Benefactor*.

*Benefactor* to you, without being thus an *over-powering Ruler*, so do these things, run into one another. To let you have your own will, and follow your carnal inclination, and cherish and favour you in this course, were to gratifie you to your ruine, and concur with you to your being for ever miserable: Which you may see plainly if you will understand wherein your true felicity and blessedness must consist, or consider what was intimated concerning it, in the proposal of this *head*; that he is to be your *Benefactor*, in being to you *himself*, your *supream and only satisfying Good*. He never doth you good *effectually* and *to purpose*, till he overcome your *carnal inclination*. For while that remains, will you ever mind him? Can you love him? desire after him? or delight in him? The first and most fundamental Law which he laies upon you is, that *you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and soul, and mind, and might*. What will become of you if you cannot obey this Law? This World will shortly be at an end, and you must, 'tis like, leave it sooner; you are undone, if your hearts be not before-

D hand

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hand so framed as that you can savour and take complacency in a better and higher Good. You will shortly have nothing left you but himself; you will be pluckt away from your Houses, and Lands, and Friends, and all your outward comforts, and now in what a case are you, if you can take no pleasure or satisfaction in God! You are therefore to yield up your self to him in full union, as with your most grateful and delectable Good; with this sense possessing your Soul, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? or whom on Earth can I desire besides thee?*

Pfal. 73. 25.

And thus you are to look upon God in your yielding your selves to him.

You are to yield your selves to his *Claim* as your rightful Owner.

To his Instruction, as your undeceiving Teacher.

To his Government, as your Gracious, Sovereign Ruler. And

To the enjoyment of him, as your best and most satisfying Good. Or your self-communicating Benefactor.

But it also concerns you to have distinct and right thoughts of the state of your case, and how things are between him

him and the Sons of men, that you may duly apply your selves to him in so great a transaction. The Gospel under which you live tells you, he treats with men in and by a Mediator, his own Son, who came down into this wretched World of ours, in great compassion to our miseries, and took our Nature, was here on Earth among us an incarnate God. God manifested in the flesh. Because we were partakers of flesh and blood, he took part with us likewise of the same, and in that Nature of ours died for us, to make way that we might yield our selves to God, and be accepted. *No man now comes to the* John 14.6. *Father but by him.* He must be acknowledged with great reverence; and a most profound homage must be rendred to him. *He that denieth the Son hath not the* 1 John 2. *Father.* And it being his pleasure, to treat 23. with us by his Son, and the case requiring that we apply our selves to him, we are to take notice of him according to those capacities wherein Scripture represents him to us. And it represents him agreeably to those same notions according to which we have shewn we are to consider God the Father in this matter; so as that

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Christ being the Mediator between him and us, when we yield our selves to him ultimately, and finally, under the notions that have been mention'd, we are first to yield our selves to his Son, Christ Jesus our Redeemer, under the like notions. For,

1. Being to yield our selves to God as our Owner, we must know, the Father hath given all things into the hands of the Son, *John* 13. 3. and that *He is Lord of all*, *Acts* 10. 36. which, in the first sense, signifies him to be, by the Father's constitution, the Owner of all things, even as he is the Redeemer. For, *he therefore died and rose again, that he might be Lord of dead and living; i.e. of both Worlds; agreeably to what he himself speaks immediately upon his resurrection from the dead; All power is given to me both in Heaven and Earth, Matth.* 28. 18.

2. And for those other notions of God under which we have shewn, we are to yield our selves to him, as our Teacher, Ruler, and Benefactor, they correspond to that threefold Office of Christ, of which you cannot but have heard much, viz. of Prophet, King, and Priest, so that we are to commit our selves to him, when  
we



we yield our selves to God, as a Teacher come forth from God, and who reveals him to us whom no man hath seen at any time: As one that must reign over us, and over the greatest on Earth, *Luke* 19. 14. and 27. *Psal.* 2. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. and by whom we are to be reconcil'd to God, and restor'd to the enjoyment of him, *Rom.* 5. 11.

And because our blind minds, and perverse hearts need light and grace from above, to direct and encline us hereto, therefore hath the Spirit of the Father and the Son a great work to do in us to this purpose. Whereupon we are to yield our selves to that blessed Spirit also, as our enlightner, and sanctifier; which our being directed to *walk in the Spirit*, *Gal.* 5. 25. and our being told that *they that have not the Spirit of Christ are none of his*, *Rom.* 8. 9. and, *that as many as are the Sons of God, are led by his Spirit*, v. 14. do plainly shew.

You see then we are to yield our selves to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, which also our having those great names, nam'd upon us in our Baptism (as we before told you) doth import.

*Yield your selves to God.*

And how necessary all this is, you will see, if

2. We consider how we are to look upon *our selves* in this transaction; *i. e.*

1. We are to consider our selves as God's creatures, being, as you have heard, to consider him as our Creator; and so we must reckon we owe our selves to him, and do but yield him what we owe, and what was his before. For, how can you but be *his*, who of his meer pleasure hath rais'd you out of nothing?

2. We must remember we have been *apostate creatures*, such as had saln, and revolted from him; and so our yielding our selves to him, is a giving our selves back to him, having injuriously withdrawn and with-held our selves from him before. And because the injury was so great as we could never make any recompence for, therefore it was necessary such a Mediator should be appointed between God and us, for whose sake only we can expect to be accepted when we yield our selves. So great a Majesty was not to be approacht by offending creatures without so great a Days-man, and Peace-maker.

3. We

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3. We must consider our selves as impure, and every way unfit for the Divine Presence, Service, and Converse, and who did therefore need the power of the Holy Ghost to be put forth upon us to make us fit; and that therefore our case required we should put our selves into such hands for that purpose.

4. We are to consider our selves *as under the Gospel, as sinners invited and call'd back to God*; as such whose case is not desperate; or who need to abandon our selves to ruine, tho' we have greatly offended, as if there were no hope. We are to consider our selves with distinction from the condition of other fallen creatures. The Angels that fell and kept not their first station, have no Gospel sent to them to invite them back, and persuade them again to yield themselves to God; you have. Into what a transport should this thought put you! how should it mollifie you! oh what a yielding temper and disposition of spirit should it work in you towards this gracious call, and just challenge, which the great God now gives you, and makes unto you!

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Thus far then you see how you are to consider God and your selves in this your yielding your selves to him. You are now next to consider,

2. What your yielding your selves to God according to such considerations must include, or be accompanied with. For it is not reasonable to think you have no more to mind in this matter, than only what is contained in the bare abstract nature of such an act; but looking upon your case in its circumstances, and considering the state of things between God and you, it greatly concerns you to see to it, that the matter be suitably carried to this state of your case. Whereupon,

1. Your yielding your selves to God must be accompani'd with very deep and serious repentance. 'Tis a most penitential surrender you are now to make of your selves to him; for you are to remember that you are but now coming back out of a state of Apostacy from your Sovereign and most rightful Lord. Yea tho' you are but renewing your surrender of your selves, having done somewhat herein before, you are yet to consider this *was* your case; and perhaps some never have

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have yet seriously thought of any such thing, but liv'd in this World hitherto as if you were your own, and there were no Lord over you: O then with what inward remorse, with what brokenness of heart, with what relentings and self-accusings should this thing now be done! you should come, smiting upon the thigh, and saying within your selves, What have I done? So long Lord, have I liv'd in this World of thine, which thou mad'st, and not I, as if I might do in it, and with my self, what I pleas'd? I have usurpt upon thy unquestionable right in me, have liv'd to my self, and not to thee; I am now convinced this was a very undutiful, unlawful way of living. Let him hear you (as he once heard *Ephraim*, or shall do) *bemoaning your selves*, and saying, *Turn me and I shall be turned, thou art the Lord my God,* &c. How can you think of yielding your selves now at length to God, without being deeply sensible of your having deferr'd it so long, and that you have not done it sooner? and how great the iniquity was of your former course? that you have all this while committed a continual robbery upon him that

Jerem. 31.  
18, 19.

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that gave you breath. *Will a man rob God?* And if you say, *Wherein have I robbed him?* you have rob'd him of your self, a greater thing than of *Tythes* and *Offerings*. And this robbery was sacrilege. For every thing due and devoted to God, hath a sacredness upon it; and consider, were you not, upon his just claim, in your Baptism devoted to him? how should this startle you? you have constantly alienated from him a sacred thing! You have been in a continual contest with him about one of the highest rights of his Sovereignty, yea and of his Godhead, for *to that*, nothing is more peculiar, than to be *Lord of all*. So that the controversy between him and you hath been, *who shall be God?* You have refus'd him his own creature; How high a crime was this? Know then you have been a great transgressor, a grievous revolter, and now therefore yield your self to him with a melting broken heart, or you do nothing.

2. It must be done with *great deliberation*; not as the meer effect of a sudden fright. What is done in a rash haste, may be as soon undone. Leisurely consider, and take the whole compass of the case; weigh

weigh with your selves the mentioned grounds upon which you are to yield your selves, and the ends you are to do it for, that things may be set right between him and you, that you may return into your own natural place and station, that you may be again stated in that subordination to your Sovereign Lord which fitly belongs to you; that he may have his right which he claims, and you the mercy which you need. Here is place for much consideration. And when *Israel* is complain'd of as less willing to acknowledge God for his Owner and Master, than the Oxe and Ass were to acknowledge theirs, all is resolved into this, that the people *did not consider*, *Isa. 1.*

3. It must be done *with Judgment*, which is the effect of such consideration. When all things have been well weigh'd that belong to this case, then let this formed Judgment pass, *Lord, I ought to be thine, and no others.* Say to him hereupon, with a convinced Judgment and Conscience, O God, I surrender my self, as now seeing none hath that right in me that thou hast; when the Love of Christ becomes constraining upon Souls, it is because

cause they *thus* judge, that *they ought no longer to live to themselves, but to him, &c.* 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15. These things last mentioned will imply a rectifi'd mind, which must be ingredient into this transaction, else it will be defective throughout.

4. It must be done with a *fulnes* of *Consent*; and herein it chiefly consists, when the Soul says, Lord, I am now most entirely willing to bethine: This *is* your *yielding your selves*. And hereby the Covenant is struck between God and you; which consists in the expressed Consent of the parties covenanting in the matters about which the Covenant is. This Covenant is about the Parties themselves, who covenant, as the Conjugal Covenant is, which resembles it; viz. that they shall be one anothers. God hath exprest his consent in his Word and Gospel, making therein the first overture to you. When you re-joyn your own consent, the thing is done: This being the sum of his Covenant, *I will be your God, and you shall be my People*, as in many places of Scripture it is gathered up. When therefore, as God hath openly testified his willingness to be their God who shall accept, and take him to be  
so,



so, you also are willing, and do consent too, you do now *take hold on his Covenant*, matters are agreed between him and you; and you may take those words as spoken to you particularly; *I have entred into Covenant with thee, and thou art become mine*; Ezek. 16. 8.

But then you must take notice that this is to be done with a *full* consent, which that is said to be which determines you, tho' it be not absolutely perfect. No grace in any faculty is perfect in this life. But as in *humane affairs*, that *will* is said to be *full*, which is the spring of answerable following actions, so it is here. If a man have some inclination to do this or that, and do it not, it goes for nothing; if he do it, his will is said to be full, tho' he have some remaining disinclination. You may be said to yield your selves to God, with a full consent, when you live afterwards as one devoted to him.

5. Your yielding your selves to God *must carry life in it*, as the following words signify; *Yield your selves to God as those that are alive from the dead*. It must be a *vital act*, and have vigour in it. You must be capable of making that true Judgment

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ment of your case, as 'tis v. 11. of *reckoning truly that you are dead to sin, but alive to God through Jesus Christ*. Do it as feeling life to spring in your souls towards God in your yielding your selves to him. What! will you offer God a carcass? not the *living Sacrifice*, which you see is required, *Rom. 12. 1.* Beg earnestly for his own Spirit of life and power, that may enable you to offer up a living Soul to the living God.

6. There must be *Faith in your yielding your selves*. For it is a *committing, or entrusting* your selves to God, with the expectation of being fav'd, and made happy by him. So Scripture speaks of it, *2 Tim. 2. 12. I know whom I have believed (or trusted) and that he is able to keep what I have committed to him against that day.* 'Tis suitable to the gracious nature of God, to his excellent greatness, to his design, to the Mediatorship of his Son, to his Promise and Gospel-Covenant, and to your own necessities, and the exigency of your own lost, undone state, that you so yield your selves to him, as a poor creature ready to perish, expecting, not for your sake, but his own, to be accepted, and

and to find mercy with him. You do him the honour which he seeks, and which is most worthy of a God, the most excellent, and a self-sufficient Being, when you do thus. You answer the intendment of the whole Gospel-constitution, which bears this Inscription, *To the praise of the glory of his grace, &c.* 'Tis honourable to him when you take his Word, that they that believe in his Son, shall not perish, but have everlasting life. You herein set to your Seal that he is true, and the more fully, and with the more significancy, when upon the credit of it you yield your selves, with an assurance that he will not destroy or reject a poor creature that yields to him, and casts its self upon his mercy.

7. Another Ingredient into this yielding of your selves must be *Love*. As *Faith*, in your yielding your selves to God, aims at *your own welfare* and salvation; so *Love*, in doing it, intends *his service*, and all the duty to him you are capable of doing him. You must be able to give this as the true reason of your act, and to resolve it into this Principle; *I yield my self to God, because I love him, and*  
from

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from the unfeigned love I bear to him ;  
to tell the World; if there were occa-  
sion, he hath captivated my heart with  
his Excellencies and his Love, and here-  
upon having nothing else, I tender my  
self to him, to tell himself, "*Lord, thou*  
"*knowest all things, thou knowest that I*  
"*love thee* ; and because I do, I present  
"*my self to thee* ; 'tis all I can do. I wish  
"*my self ten thousand times better for*  
"*thy blessed sake* ; and if I had in me  
"*all the Excellencies of many thousand*  
"*Angels, I were too mean a thing, and*  
"*such as nothing but thy own good-*  
"*ness could count worthy thine ac-*  
"*ceptance* ; because I love thee, I covet  
"*to be near thee, I covet to be thine,*  
"*I covet to lead my life with thee,*  
"*to dwell in thy presence* ; far be  
"*it from me to be as without thee in*  
"*the World as heretofore. I love thee,*  
"*O Lord, my strength, because thine own*  
"*perfections highly deserve it, and be-*  
"*cause thou hast heard my voice, and*  
"*hast delivered my Soul from death,*  
"*mine Eyes from tears, and my Feet from*  
"*falling, and I yield my self to thee,*  
"*because I love thee. I make an offer of*  
"*my*

"my self to be thy servant, thy servant, O  
"Lord, thou hast loosed my bonds; and  
"now I desire to bind my self in new  
"ones to thee, that are never to be loosed.  
And you can make no doubt but that  
it ought to be done therefore with dis-  
positions and a temper suitable to the  
state you are now willing to come into,  
that of a devoted Servant; viz.

8. *With great reverence and humility.*  
For, consider to whom you are tendering  
your self; to the *high and lofty One that*  
*inhabiteth Eternity*: To him that hath  
*Heaven for his Throne, and Earth for his*  
*Footstool*; and in comparison of whom  
all the inhabitants of the World are but  
*as Grasshoppers, and the Nations of the*  
*Earth as the drop of a bucket, and the dust of*  
*the Balance, &c.* Yea to him against whom  
you have sinn'd, and before whose pure  
eyes, you cannot, *in your self*, but appear  
most offensively impure; so that you have  
reason to be ashamed and blush to lift up  
your eyes before him.

9. And yet it surely ought to be *with*  
*great joy and gladness of heart*, that he  
hath exprest himself willing to accept  
such as you, and that he hath made you

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willing

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willing to yield your selves. The very thought should make your heart leap and spring within you, that he should ever have bespoken such as we are to yield our selves to him ! when he might have neglected us, and let us wander endlessly, without ever looking after us more. How should it glad your hearts this day, to have such a message brought you from the great God, and which you find is written in his own Word, to yield your selves to him ! Should not your hearts answer with wonder ; “ And blessed “ Lord ! Art thou willing again to have “ to do with us ! who left thee having “ no cause, and who returning can be of “ no use to thee ! O blessed be God that we may yield our selves back unto him ! that we are invited and encourag’d to it. And you have cause to bless God, and rejoyce, if this day you feel your heart willing to yield your selves to him, and become his. Do you indeed find

**Pla. 110. 3.** your selves willing ? *You are willing in the day of his power.* This is the day of his power upon your hearts. Many are call’d and refuse ; he often stretches out his

**Prov. 1. 24.** *hands, and no man regards.* Perhaps you have

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have been call'd upon often before this day to do this same thing, and neglected it, had no heart to it; and he might have said to you; Now I will never treat with you more; if you should call, I will not hear; if you stretch out your hands, I will not regard it, but laugh at your destruction, and mock when your fear cometh. But if now he is pleased to call once more, your hearts do answer; Lord, here we are, we are now ready to surrender our selves; you may conclude he hath *poured out his Spirit upon you*: The Spirit of the Lord is now moving upon this Assembly, this is indeed a joyful day, the day which he Psal. 118. hath himself made, and you ought to rejoyce and be glad in it. When the people in *David's* days offered of their substance to God for the service of his house, 'tis said, *The people rejoyced for that they offered willingly*: And *David*, 1 Chron. we are told, *blest God before all the* 29. 9.  
*Congregation*—saying, *Thine, O Lord, is the greatness and the power—But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine*

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*own have we given thee.* If you are this day willing to offer *your selves*, how much is this a greater thing! and it comes of *him*, and 'tis of *his own* you are now giving him; for he had a most unquestionable right in you before.

See the  
Treatise of  
Self-dedi-  
cation  
from p. 71.  
to 103.

10. *You should do it with solemnity.* For, have you ever had a business of greater importance to transact in all your days? If you were to dispose of an *Estate*, or a *Child*, would you not have all things be as exprefs, and clear, as may be? and would not they insist to have it so, with whom you deal in any such affair? And is there not a solemnity belonging to all such transactions? especially if you were to dispose of *your self*; as in the Conjugal Covenant? tho' that is to be but for this short uncertain time of life; so as that the relation you enter into to day, may be by death dissolv'd and broken off again to morrow: How much more explicit, clear, and solemn, should this your covenanting with God in Christ be? wherein you are to make over *your Soul* to him? and *for eternity*. You are to become



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become his, under the bond of an *everlasting Covenant*. - You are entering a relation never to be broken off. This God is to be your God for ever and ever, and upon the same terms you are to be his. Is your Immortal Soul of less account with you than the temporal concerns of a mortal Child, that you are placing out but for a term of years that soon expires? yea or than a piece of Ground, or an Horse, or a Sheep, about which how punctual and express are your Bargains and Contracts wont to be? Or are only the matters of your Soul, and wherein you have to do with the great God, to be slightly managed? or to be huddled up in confusion? or to be slid over in silent intimations? 'Tis true, that so express and solemn dealing in yielding and giving up your selves to God, is not needful on his part, who understands sincerity without any expression of yours; but 'tis needful on your part, that a deep and lasting impression may be made upon your Spirits; which if you be sincere, you will not only feel your selves to need, but your own temper and inclination will prompt you to

it ; accounting you can never be under bonds strong and sure enough to him : You will not only apprehend necessity, but will relish and tast pleasure in any such transaction with the blessed God, in avouching him to be your God, and your self to be his. The more solemn it is, the more grateful it will be to you.

Do so then ; Fall before his Throne ; Prostrate your self at his footstool ; and having chosen your fit season, when nothing may interrupt you ; and having shut up your self with him, pour out your Soul to him ; tell him you are now come on purpose, to offer your selves to him as his own. O that you would not let this night pass without doing so ! Tell him you have too long neglected him, and forgotten to whom you belong'd ; humbly beseech him for his pardon, and that he will now accept of you, for your Redeemer's sake, as being through his grace resolv'd never to live so great a stranger to him, or be such a wanderer from him more. And when you have done so, remember the time ; let it be with you a noted memorable

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memorable day, as you would be sure to keep the day in memory when you became such a ones Servant or Tenant, or your Marriage-day : Renew this your agreement with God often, but forget it never.

Perhaps some may say, But what needs all this ? were we not once devoted and given up to God in Baptism ? and is not that sufficient ? To what purpose should we do again a thing that hath once been so solemnly done ?

But here I desire you to consider, Are you never to become the Lords by your own choice ? Are you always to be Christians, only by another's Christianity, not by your own ? And again, Have you not broken your Baptismal Vow ? have you not forgot it for the most part ever since ? I am afraid too many never think of any such matter at all, that ever they were devoted to God by others, but only upon such an occasion as this, to make it an excuse that they may never do such a thing themselves. And consider, were these Christian *Romans* on whom the Apostle presses this duty never Baptiz'd, think

E 4                      you ?

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you? Read over the foregoing part of the Chapter, wherein you find him putting them in mind that they had been *baptiz'd into Christs death, and buried with him in baptism*, and that therefore this was to be an argument to them why they *should yield themselves to God*; not why they should not.

Wherefore our way is now plain and open to what we have further to do, viz.

2. To apply this practical Doctrine, and press the Precept further upon you, which hath been open'd to you, and prest by parts in some measure already, in our insisting on the several heads, which you have seen do belong to it, and are one way or other comprehend- ed in it. Which will therefore make this latter part of our work the shorter, and capable of being dispatch't in the fewer words; and with blessed effect, if the Spirit of the living God shall vouchsafe to co-operate, and deal with your hearts and mine. Shall we then all agree upon this thing? Shall we unite in one resolution, *We will be the Lords*? Shall every one say in his own heart,

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heart, For my part, I will, and so will I, and so will I? Come now, *one and all*. This is no unlawful confederacy, 'tis a blessed combination! *Come then, let us join our selves to the Lord in a perpetual Covenant, not to be forgotten.* Jer. 50. 5.

With whatsoever after-solemnity, you may renew this Obligation, and Bond of God upon your Souls, as I hope you will do it, every one apart, in your Closets, or in any corner, and you cannot do it too fully, or too often; yet let us now all resolve the thing; and this assembly make a joint-surrender, and oblation of it self to the great God our Sovereign rightful Lord, through our blessed Redeemer and Mediator, by the Eternal Spirit, (which I hope is breathing and at work among us,) as one living sacrifice, as all of us, alive from the dead, to be for ever sacred to him? O blessed Assembly! O happy act and deed! With how grateful and well-pleasing an odour will the kindness and dutifulness of this Offering ascend, and be received above! God will accept, Heaven will rejoice, Angels will concur, and gladly fall in with us. We hereby ad-join

join our selves in relation, and in heart and spirit, to the *general Assembly, to the Church of the First-born Ones written in Heaven, to the innumerable Company of Angels, and to the Spirits of just men made perfect*, and within a little while shall be actually among them. Is it possible there should be now among us any dissenting Vote? Consider,

1. 'Tis a plain and unquestionable thing you are prest unto: A thing that admits of no dispute, and against which you have nothing to say, and about which you cannot but be already convinc't. And 'tis a matter full of danger, and upon which tremendous consequences depend, to go on in any practice, or in any neglect, against a conviction of Judgment and Conscience. For your own Heart and Conscience must *condemn* you if you consider, and it *betrays* you if you consider not. How fearful a thing is it for a man to carry his own Doom in his own Bosom! to go up and down the World with a Self-condemning Heart, if it be awake, and which if it be not, yet cannot sleep always, and must awake with the greater

ter terror at length. And in so plain case 'tis most certainly Gods Deputy, and speaks his Mind; *If our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts,* 1 Joh. 3. 20. &c.

2. 'Tis that therefore the refusal whereof none of you would avow. Who among us can have the confidence to stand forth and say, *I will be none of the Lords?* Would any man be content to go with this writ upon his Forehead from day to day? And doth not that signifie such a refusal to be a shameful thing? That must needs be an ill temper of Mind which one would be ashamed any one should know.

3. And 'tis a *mean thing* to dissemble, to be willing to be thought, and counted what we are not, or to do what in truth we do not.

4. And considering what inspection we are under, *'tis a vain thing.* For do we not know that *eyes which are as a flame of fire,* behold us, and pierce into our very Souls? Do we not know *all things in us are naked and manifest to him with whom we have to do?* And Heb. 4. 12. that he discerns it, if there be any heart among

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among us that is not sincere in this thing?

5. Consider that this is the very design of the Gospel you live under. What doth it signifie or intend, but to recal Apostate Creatures back again to God? What is the Christian Religion you profess, but a State of devotedness to God, under the conduct, and thorough the mediation of Christ? You frustrate the Gospel, and make your Religion a nullity, and an empty name till you do this.

6. And how will you lift up your heads at last in the great day? and before this *God the judge of all*? You cannot now plead ignorance. If perhaps any among you have not been formerly so expressly call'd, and urg'd to this yielding your selves to God; now you are: and from his own plain Word 'tis charg'd upon you. Will not this be remembered hereafter? What will you say when the great God whose Creature you are, speaks to you with the *voice of Thunder*, and bids you gird up *your Loins*, and give him an answer? "Were you not on such a day, in such  
" a place



“ a place demanded and claim'd in my  
“ Name ? Were you not told, were  
“ you not convinc't you ought to yield  
“ your selves to me, and yet you did  
“ it not ? Are you prepar'd to contest  
“ with your Maker ? Where is your right,  
“ where is your power, to stand against  
“ me in this contest ?

7. But if you sincerely yield your selves,  
the main Controversie is at end be-  
tween the Great God and you. All  
your former sins are pardon'd and done  
away at once. Those glad-tydings you  
have often heard that import nothing  
but *glory to God in the highest, peace on  
earth, and good will towards men*, plain-  
ly shew that the Great God whom you  
had offended, hath no design to destroy  
you, but only to make you yield, and  
give him back his own. Though you  
have formerly liv'd a wandering life,  
and been as a Vagabond on the Earth  
from your true Owner, it will be all  
forgotten. How readily was the re-  
turning Prodigal receiv'd ! and so will  
you. How quiet rest will you have  
this night, when upon such terms there  
is a reconciliation between God and  
you !

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you! You have given him his own, and he is pleas'd, and most of all for this that he hath you now to save you. You were his to destroy before, now you are his to save. He could easily destroy you against your will, but 'tis only with your will, he having made you willing, that he must save you. And his bidding you yield, implies his willingness to do so. O how much of Gospel is there in this invitation to you to yield your selves to God! consider it as the voice of Grace. Will he that bids a poor wretch yield it self, reject or destroy when it doth so?

8. And how happily may you now live the rest of your days in this World. You will live under his care, for will he not take care of his own, those that are of his own House? An Infidel would. You are now of his Family, under his immediate Government, and under his continual Blessing.

And were you now to give an account where you have been to day, and what you have been doing: If you say, you have been engag'd this day in a solemn treaty with the Lord of Heaven  
and

and Earth, *about yielding your selves to him:*  
And it be further askt; Well, and what  
was the issue? Have you agreed? Must  
you, any of you be oblig'd by the truth  
of the case to say, No; astonishing an-  
swer! What! Hast thou been treating  
with the Great God, the God of thy  
life, and not agreed? What, man! Did  
he demand of thee any unreasonable  
thing? Only to yield my self. Why  
that was in all the World the most rea-  
sonable thing. Wretched Creature, whi-  
ther now wilt thou go? What wilt thou  
do with thy self? Where wilt thou lay  
thy hated head? But if you can say,  
Blessed be God I gladly agreed to the  
Proposal: He gave me the Grace not to  
deny him: Then may it be said this  
was a good days work, and you will  
have cause to bless God for this day as  
long as you have a day to live.

*FINIS.*